

WASHINGTON – Congressman Spencer Bachus (AL-6) today participated in a tour of tornado damage in Tuscaloosa County and Jefferson County with U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Sean Donovan.

The loss of housing caused by the devastating storms that struck on April 27 was a focus of Secretary Donovan's visit. Officials toured the Rosedale Court Apartments in Tuscaloosa and the Timber Ridge Apartments in Birmingham, two housing projects struck by the storms.

Bachus, who toured parts of the district with Federal Emergency Management Agency Director Craig Fugate on Friday, said that providing temporary shelter and replacing destroyed housing is one of Alabama's many recovery challenges.

"We appreciate that Secretary Donovan came to Tuscaloosa and Birmingham to view the housing damage first-hand. It is vital that we have close cooperation among federal, state, and local officials as relief and recovery efforts move forward. One lesson that has been reinforced for us is the value of early warnings and the availability of storm shelters for people who live in housing without secure interior spaces. HUD's Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG) has permitted localities to use funding to build storm shelters since 2003."

The storm shelter provision was authorized by The Tornado Shelters Act, which Congressman Bachus wrote and successfully steered into law in response to tornado incidents in 1998 that ravaged some of the same communities struck by the recent storms.

